### Betty Brinn Children's Museum 2015 Annual Report

## YEARS

#### April 2015 marked the Museum's 20th anniversary as the region's premier resource for early education.

Since opening, the Museum has benefited 3.8 million children and adults, including 248,661 in 2015 - a new record. Throughout the past two decades, we have maintained our commitment to addressing the needs of a diverse and growing audience, to developing resources that reflect current trends in education, and to collaborating with a broad range of public and private partners who share our goal of helping children become accomplished students and responsible adults - and 2015 was no exception. Ever-changing community needs, emerging technologies, and new research about the value of experiential learning have guided the development of our exhibits, programs and services. We remain dedicated to providing educational activities that prepare children for success in school and in life and, most importantly, to ensuring that all children in our community have access to our dynamic facility and enrichment opportunities that can help build their skills, shape their values and cultivate their capacity for imagination and creativity.

We are proud to be one of Milwaukee's most respected and popular family destinations. Thanks to the investment and remarkable support of our visitors, members, volunteers, contributors, and community partners, 2015 was a year of extraordinary growth and we are pleased to highlight just a few of our many achievements in this report.





## Changing spaces

In 2015, visitors benefited from a variety of favorite, new and enhanced exhibits – unique, interactive spaces that enable families to spend quality time together and support a child's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development.

#### In February, we introduced Word Headquarters,

a new exhibit made possible by a generous grant from the Northwestern Mutual Foundation that highlights literacy as the key to a child's academic and lifelong success, and focuses on building the skills of early learners and emerging readers, including print awareness, alphabet knowledge, phonetic and phonological awareness, visual and spoken vocabulary, narrative and reading comprehension. Our pretend *Word Headquarters* company provides an engaging setting where "employees" are hard at work cranking out the building blocks of literacy. The exhibit also offers caregivers simple and engaging activities to support a child's learning process and literacy development.

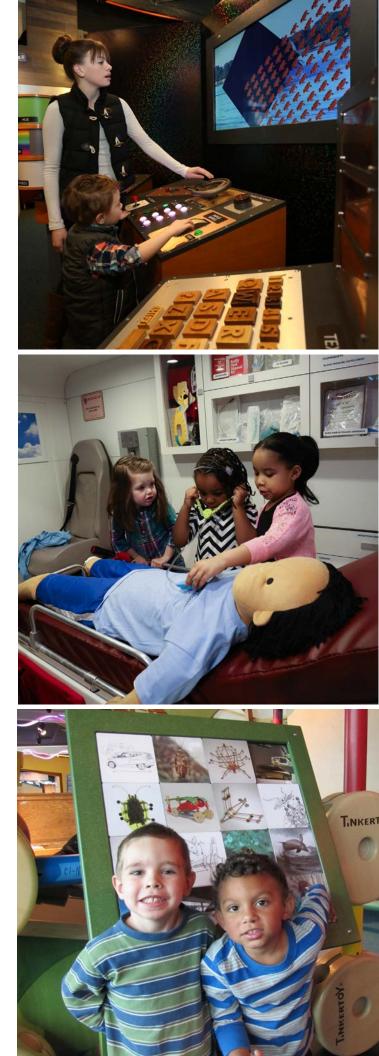
#### Our popular wellness-themed exhibit, Kohl's Healthy Kids: It's Your Move!, was enhanced

**with new components.** Thanks to our continued partnership with Kohl's Cares and Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, we added new features that highlight water, fire and traffic safety; avoiding head injuries and falls; and how to respond in the event of an emergency. Activities include a kid-sized emergency response ambulance, interactive water and fire safety game stations, a safety mini-golf course, and traffic lights.

#### Several visitor favorites returned in 2015:

Bugs on the Balcony, a hands-on exhibit sponsored by Presto-X that features fun activities to help kids learn about the fascinating world of insects, reopened in late May for the summer season. *TINKERTOY: Build Your Imagination* – a favorite since its debut in 2009 – returned to the Museum in the fall thanks to a generous gift from GE Healthcare and offered open-ended opportunities for children to use their imagination and creativity to design and build. And, thanks to our friends at Wm. K. Walthers, Inc., *Let's Play Railway!*™ returned to the Museum in December with a refurbished train for little engineers to enjoy role-play activities in the exhibit's engine, cattle wagon and caboose.

Visitor favorites continued to include *Pocket Park* presented by PNC, a pretend outdoor environment designed to engage our youngest visitors, and *Home Town*, a kid-sized business district that helps children explore the people, places and processes that make a community successful.





#### There's more excitement to come!

In fall 2016, the Museum will open *Big League Fun*, an exhibit developed with permission from Major League Baseball that celebrates the game of baseball while engaging children and families in activities that promote science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) education. Visitors will explore the ins and outs of the MLB season as they learn about their favorite teams and players, test their skills, decipher the stats and rules of the game, and discover the game's rich history and traditions. The exhibit will be especially engaging for children, and its immersive settings, baseball memorabilia and clever use of trivia will appeal to fans of all ages. After its debut at our Museum, *Big League Fun* will begin a four-year tour to peer institutions throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Plans are underway to introduce new opportunities for learning in *Pocket Park*, our feature exhibit developed specifically for the Museum's youngest visitors (infants, toddlers and preschool-age children) and their families. Our 2016 plans include engaging activities for children, and information for caregivers about early literacy, school-readiness skills, and the importance of well-child medical and dental care.

## Experiences that the the terms of terms

More than a million children and adults have participated in the Museum's educational programs over the years, including workshops, parent/child activities, performances, field trips, special demonstrations and events. In 2015, the Museum offered a variety of programs and activities that inspired children and supported adult caregivers in their role as a child's first teacher.



More than 2,000 children and adults participated in weekly programs developed specifically for preschoolers that highlight

literacy, social and emotional development, and early STEAM concepts, including *Tot Time, Music & Me* and *Pint-Size Science.* 

More than 30,000 children and adults visited as part of a field trip in 2015, as educators continued to rely on the Museum's exhibits and facilitated programs as a resource for complementing their classroom curricula. Seventy-three percent of groups received free/subsidized admission and transportation assistance through the Kohl's Cares Field Trip Grant Program and the Museum's Special Admissions Fund.

We expanded our family programs offered in

**Be A Maker (BAM)**, a communal workshop that invites visitors to explore do-it-yourself projects using tools, materials, digital resources and technologies that help children build new skills, collaborate and share what they learn. More than 14,500 children and adults participated in a BAM program in 2015, many hosted by talented local makers and program partners.

#### Partnerships with local organizations also enhanced the Museum experience for almost

**5,000 visitors,** including programs and performances offered by Core El Centro, Danceworks, Dental Associates, First Stage, Florentine Opera, Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful, Milwaukee Ballet, MPTV, Riveredge Nature Center, Trinity Irish Dancers, the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music and the Zoological Society of Milwaukee

#### Events provided a unique platform for introducing educational content throughout

**the year.** In April, we celebrated our 20th anniversary with a week of birthday-themed workshops during spring break, as well as a 20th birthday party with cake, dancing, and a giant piñata created in *BAM*. We also hosted our free *Outdoor Recreation Resource Fair* that featured environmental education programs and highlighted Wisconsin's best places for outdoor activities. Our ever-popular *Valentine Ice Cream Social* and *Not-So-Scary Halloween* events, as well as our new *Holiday Kitchen* event, were made possible by presenting sponsor Sendik's Food Market in partnership with Breadsmith, Kemps, Palermo's Pizza, Sargento, and Turbana. Families also celebrated national holidays and other special occasions at the Museum, including Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, Earth Day, Grandparents' Day, the first day of spring and New Year's Eve.

## Helping kids biological and the second secon

Although our community offers many opportunities for older children to explore science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math (STEAM), research indicates that STEAM activities can positively influence early literacy and school readiness, and that they should be a priority for early learners. In 2014, the Museum made a commitment to enhance STEAM-based learning by introducing the global Maker Movement to our young audience through the addition of *BAM*, our family-friendly makerspace. Building on that success, we expanded STEAM-based learning experiences for visitors – and the entire community – again in 2015. Children were provided with opportunities to learn from accomplished local makers, experiment with new technologies, processes and materials, and explore the careers that will shape the future of our global economy and workforce.

#### The Museum's *Be A Maker (BAM)* space continued to serve as an important resource for families, schools and community groups.

Thanks to support from Brady Corporation, the City of Milwaukee Arts Board and the Wisconsin Arts Board, and Time Warner Cable, *BAM* programs were also offered during *US Bank & FOX 6 Neighborhood Night*, an evening each month when the Museum provides free admission, enabling us to engage families whose circumstances often limit their access to STEAM-based activities.

#### In 2015, the Museum and the Milwaukee Makerspace co-hosted the second-annual

Maker Faire® Milwaukee, a free, family-friendly event held in September at Wisconsin State Fair Park. Thanks to contributions from presenting sponsor Brady Corporation and other supporters, the event provided 200 tech enthusiasts, inventors, artists, students, engineers, and do-it-yourselfers with an opportunity to share their work. Maker Faire served more than 54,000 people (a 26% increase over 2014), making it the largest free Faire in the United States. Attendees benefited from hands-on workshops, talks from DIY experts, how-to maker demonstrations, build competitions, special performances, and opportunities to learn specific making skills. Plans are underway for our 2016 Faire, including a field trip program for students from schools serving primarily low-income neighborhoods, a Community of Practice program for educators, and transportation assistance to ensure access by disadvantaged families.







## Access to early education

In 2001, the Museum made a commitment to provide support for disadvantaged families that were struggling to raise a young child; today, more than 80,000 children and adults benefit annually from free parenting education, admission/membership, field trips, transportation assistance programs and events provided by the Museum to ensure support for our community's most vulnerable children, including families living in poverty, foster families, teen parents, at-risk fathers, and others whose circumstances often limit their access to resources that can positively influence a child's development. For many, the Museum serves as a refuge from dangerous neighborhoods and difficult living conditions, offering distressed families the chance to spend meaningful time together in an educational, safe and welcoming environment.



#### In 1999, we introduced Neighborhood Night,

an evening each month that offers free admission and educational programs to meet the needs of low-income and working families. Almost 6,000 children and adults participated in 2015, thanks to presenting sponsor US Bank, with support from media partner FOX 6.

#### *Family Focus,* a program that provides free parenting education, membership and transportation assistance to disadvantaged families, enrolled a record 1,365 families

**in 2015.** Thanks to a grant from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, we completed the production of a program orientation video that will enable us to offer more enrollment sessions, serve as a tool that partner agencies can use to introduce the program at their sites, and help highlight the critical role that caregivers play in a young child's development. *Family Focus* was made possible in 2015 by grants from Brady Corporation Foundation, Albert J. and Flora H. Ellinger Foundation, Joy Global Foundation, Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Herzfeld Foundation, Krause Family Foundation, PNC Foundation, A.O. Smith Foundation and 25 partner agencies that helped us engage some of our community's most vulnerable families.

#### In August, we held our annual Back-to-School

**Resource Fair** thanks to major support from Mike and Jennifer Keough, with additional support provided by US Bank and GE Healthcare employees. The event provided free backpacks, school supplies and information to help disadvantaged families prepare for a successful school year, and benefited a record 1,934 children and adults.

#### The Museum provided free and subsidized field trips to almost 6,000 children and adults through our Special Admissions Program,

helping to ensure Museum access by disadvantaged school groups, adults and children with disabilities, and low-income community groups, childcare centers and neighborhood organizations. Major support for the program was provided by Gary and Denise Elfe, and Onnie Leach Smith.

## Play with purpose

Ensuring the positive impact of our work is a priority, and in 2015, we expanded our commitment to evaluating the Museum experience.

#### The Museum collaborated with researchers from the University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee and

Madison) to assess the experience of 278 third- and fourthgrade students who participated in a special maker-based field trip thanks to a grant from the Herzfeld Foundation. The study demonstrated that the Museum's maker activities can help students improve their understanding of and interest in STEAM, and inspire educators to provide these experiences in their classrooms. A second study funded by the Herzfeld Foundation will evaluate how Museum maker programs can be used to complement classroom learning; the project will engage more than 900 students and their teachers with results available in 2016.

#### A current research study will evaluate the influence of specific Museum experiences on a child's early literacy skills and a caregiver's understanding of their role in the learning

**process.** The study, funded by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Alma Smith Wright Fund, Clarence G. Reible Fund, Johnel Fisher Moore Fund, and the Douglas L.P. Hamilton Fund and conducted in partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Marquette University, will track families who visit the Museum regularly and those who visit occasionally, with results available in 2017.









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The Museum's exhibits, educational programs, and extensive community outreach commitments are made possible by the generous support of many businesses, organizations, families and individuals who recognize the profound influence of early education on a child's academic and lifelong success and – in the longer term – on the future of our community.







#### In 2015, the Museum received a landmark seven-figure anonymous donation, the largest

**in our history.** This contribution along with other generous gifts and grants represent an important investment in the Museum's continued success and our capacity to meet the needs of *all* children and families in our community.

#### The Exhibit Development Initiative set a record

**in 2015.** Museums across the nation lease/purchase exhibits to keep their visitor experience fresh, reflect key trends in early learning, and highlight their educational mission in the communities they serve. In 2005, the Museum launched the *Initiative*, a program that creates exhibits – initially for our own facility – that we can subsequently offer for lease or sale to other educational facilities. The *Initiative* has made remarkable progress since its introduction; the program generated more than 26 percent of our income in 2015, and our exhibits have been displayed at more than 100 institutions across the nation and around the world, including children's museums, science centers, schools and libraries.

To celebrate the Museum's 20th anniversary, Greg Marcus (who served as President of the Museum's Board of Directors when we opened our doors in 1995) and his wife, Linda, were joined by brother David Marcus (our Board President in 2015) and his wife, Melina, to serve as Honorary Chairs for the 2015

**Museum Gala.** Thanks to their hard work and a talented volunteer committee, the event raised critical funds to support the Museum's operation and community outreach initiatives. The event was supported by Patron Sponsors the Northwestern Mutual Foundation and PNC Financial Services Group; Partnering Sponsors Boston Store and Bridie and Ed Mooney; Raffle Sponsor The Marcus Corporation; and many other individuals and sponsors we are pleased to acknowledge in our Honor Roll. The *Gala Wish List* – which enabled guests to direct a gift to a specific program or project – provided much-needed support for Museum programs that benefit families in need.

## Honor Roll

Thanks to our Founders, capital campaign donors, community supporters, and a remarkable naming gift made in honor of Betty Brinn, we opened our doors in 1995 and welcomed 120,000 visitors who flocked to Milwaukee's lakefront to see the new Betty Brinn Children's Museum – in 2015, almost 250,000 children and adults benefited from our exhibits, programs and services. For two decades, our work has been inspired by Betty Brinn's commitment to supporting families that are struggling to raise a young child. We are deeply grateful to the individuals, businesses and organizations that support our educational mission and share our goal of improving the lives of children and families in our community. Because the Museum does not receive operating support from the United Way, UPAF or from city, county or state governments, contributions are critical to maintaining our facility and outreach commitments, and we are honored to acknowledge our 2015 Annual Campaign donors of \$100 or more, *Gala* Sponsors, and Corporate, Business and Donor-level members.



#### **\$25,000-\$99,999**



GE Healthcare

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#### \$5,000-\$9,999

A.O. Smith Foundation BMO Harris Bank Debra Altshul-Stark and Brian Stark Karen and Steve Guy Harley-Davidson Foundation Marquette University Palermo's Pizza Piala's Nursery & Garden Shop Sensient Technologies Turbana

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#### We are pleased to acknowledge donors who have made pledge payments on previous pledges.

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We apologize to any individual or organization who was inadvertently omitted from this list or is incorrectly listed.



#### Statement of activities

January 1 - December 31, 2015 (audited)

#### Income

Earned Revenue	
Admission	\$593,348
Membership	343,616
Programs	35,579
Special Events	207,535
Interest	1,083
Exhibit Rental	479,095
Exhibit Sales	62,728
Other Income	75,836
Total Earned Revenue	\$1,798,820
Contributions	
Gifts and Grants	\$1,843,832
In-kind Goods & Services	207,168
Total Contributions	\$2,051,000

#### **Total Income**

\$3,849,820

#### Expenses

Change in Net Assets	\$27,479
Transfer to Foundation	(1,237,053)
Total Expenses	\$2,585,288
Depreciation	289,227
General/Administrative	380,775
Development	268,779
Membership/Marketing	465,590
Programs/Visitor Services	339,090
Exhibit for Rent /Sale	156,506
Exhibits	582,851
Occupancy	102,470



#### Balance

**Total Net Assets** 

At December 31, 2015 (audited)

#### Assets Current Investments Exhibits Leasehold Improvements Equipment

Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(3,126,671)
Other Assets	23,227
Total Assets	\$3,979,406
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$710,562
Net Assets	
Unrestricted	\$506,236
Fixed Assets	2,492,052
Temporarily Restricted	270,556

Total Liabilities and Net Assets \$3,979

\$3,979,406

\$3,268,844

\$1,467,700

4,123,800

1,273,764

217,586

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## Financials

#### **betty brinn children's Museu** 929 East Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53202 Connect with us **f s b** bbcmkids.org

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Collect them all Reading with Rabbit - Counting with Kitty - Shapes with Apes